

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 08931 191818Z
ACTION AF-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 8931

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, NI, CASC
SUBJECT: BAKER CASE

REF: STATE 181549

1. AFTER STUDYING REFTEL AND ONCE AGAIN REVIEWING WITH STAFF
THE PROS AND CONS OF AN APPROACH TO YAR'ADUA, I CONCLUDED I WOULD
ATTEMPT ARRANGE SUCH MEETING.

2. IN VIEW USEFUL EFFORTS AND PRODUCTIVE RESULTS OBTAINED IN
RECENT WEEKS FROM FABUNMI, AND IN DEFERENCE TO HIS WARNING
YESTERDAY THAT HE FEARED GOING TO YAR'ADUA WOULD JEOPARDIZE
CHANCES OF A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME, WE TOLD HIM OF MY INTENTION AND
THEN ASKED WHETHER HE WISHED TO SUGGEST THE BEST WAY TO ARRANGE
THE MEETING. HE REITERATED HIS CONCERN ABOUT SUCH A MEETING
AND DECLINED TO OFFER ADVICE ON HOW TO ARRANGE IT. WHEN WE THEN
APPROACHED MUSA OF AMERICAS DEPARTMENT, HE SAID PROTOCOL OFFICE
SHOULD HANDLE IT. WHEN WE ASKED PROTOCOL, THEY BUCKED IT BACK
TO MUSA, WHO SUBSEQUENTLY CALLED ME TO SAY THAT MEA COULD NOT RPT
NOT AUTHORIZE ME TO SEE THE CHIEF OF STAFF. I SAID I THOUGH
SUCH A DECISION WOULD MORE APPROPRIATELY COME FROM THE ACTING
FOREIGN MINISTER AND ASKED TO SEE HIM. MUSA CALLED ME LATE THIS
AFTERNOON TO SAY THAT UKEGBU WAS NOT AVAILABLE UNTIL FRIDAY BUT
THAT I COULD ASSURE THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE THAT UKEGBU SHARED
THE FABUNMI/MUSA OPINION THAT I SHOULD NOT BE AUTHORIZED TO SEE
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THE CHIEF OF STAFF.

3. MUSA SAID HE WISHED TO REASSURE ME THAT HE AGREED WITH
FABUNMI THAT ISSUANCE OF THE RESIDENCE PERMIT WAS NOT ONLY A
MATTER OF TIME. ACCORDING TO MUSA, IF BAKER CAME TO NIGERIA NOW
FOR A JULY BOARD MEETING OF NDI, "HE MIGHT GO AWAY WITH HIS
RESIDENCE PERMIT IN HAND." I ASKED WHETHER THIS MEANT THAT BAKER

WOULD BE EXPECTED TO PLEAD HIS CASE IN PERSON AND THAT A PERMIT MIGHT NOT RPT NOT BE FORTHCOMING IF HE DID NOT AVAIL HIMSELF OF THE VISA OFFER. MUSA SAID THIS WAS NOT WHAT HE MEANT. BAKER COULD PICK UP HIS VISA WHENEVER HE WISHED. ACTION TOWARD A FAVORABLE RESOLUTION OF THE RESIDENCE PERMIT QUESTION WOULD MOVE AHEAD REGARDLESS.

4. WE REALIZE THAT THIS LATEST DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT BE ANY MORE PLEASING TO BAKER THAN HIS INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW I SHOULD DO MY JOB ARE TO ME. IT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT I CANNOT GET TO YAR'ADUA ON THIS SUBJECT AT PRESENT. I WILL WISH TO DISCUSS NEXT STEPS WITH THE DEPARTMENT WHEN I RETURN TO WASHINGTON.
EASUM

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